

BISHOP'S ORCHARDS

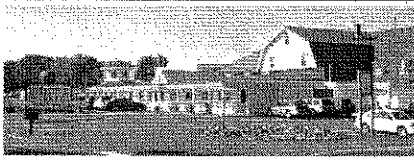
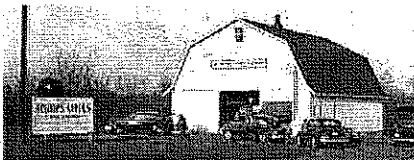
QUALITY FARM PRODUCTS SINCE 1871

"Orchard Hill Farm" West Side Phone 35

6 Generations in Agriculture

Walter Goodrich Bishop
Burton Walter Bishop
Arthur & Charles R. Bishop
Albert & Charles E. Bishop
Keith, Jonathan & Diane Bishop
Sarah Bishop DellaVentura

B.W. BISHOP & SONS, INC.
1355 BOSTON POST RD.
GUILFORD, CT 06437-2318



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www.bishopsorchards.com
*Dedicated to Growing & Providing
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Paul E. Stacey
Department of Environmental Protection
Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse
Planning & Standards Division
79 Elm Street
Hartford, Connecticut 06106-5127

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
BUREAU OF WATER PROTECTION AND LAND REUSE
OFFICE OF THE BUREAU CHIEF

FEB 03 2010

February 1, 2010

Dear Paul,

I am writing to express my concerns with the new stream flow regulations that have been proposed by Connecticut DEP.

Bishop's Orchards maintains six permitted diversions for agricultural use. In addition we purchase water from the Connecticut Water Company via a hydrant meter to irrigate fields that are not near our existing diversions.

We employ trickle irrigation as well as portable sprinkler systems to provide water for our crops when needed due to lack of rain and in some instances for spring frost protection in our strawberry fields

We are concerned that there is no provision in the proposed regulations that ensures that farmers will have access to water at critical times of low flow or drought emergencies. There are twenty exemptions in the proposed regulations. Agriculture, as defined by CGS 1-1 (q), should be added as an exempt activity.

Without access to water many of our crops will fail. Even in years when there seems to be an excessive amount of cool rainy weather like just occurred in 2009, there are weeks and months with rainfall inadequate to maintain the health of our crops. In the case of our blueberry and raspberry plantings, which are irrigated via a trickle system, they have a constant need for water to mature the crop and maintain the health of the planting. Failure to provide adequate water during critical periods would not only cost us the loss of the current crop, but threaten the plants themselves with a huge loss in investment in the planting and several years of crop loss while we attempted to reestablish the lost plantings. Reestablishment would be next to impossible without the ability to irrigate the young plants which are especially sensitive to lack of moisture.

It is already challenging enough for agricultural producers in Connecticut to compete with producers in other states and abroad.

This regulation imposes one more obstacle that affects our ability to keep our operation profitable.

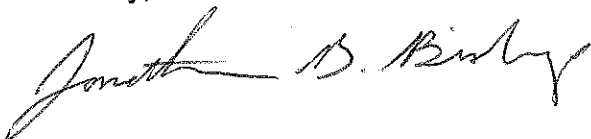
We are concerned that maintaining our current diversion permits will become more expensive under the proposed regulations. In addition, in an emergency situation there is no guarantee the water company will have the available water or agree to provide water to us and it is likely that our rates to purchase water will go up significantly under the proposed regulations based on the costs that the Connecticut Water Company will incur to comply with these new requirements.

Before implementing these regulations that will severely impact Connecticut Agriculture, The Department of Environmental Protection should:

1.) Reconvene the members of the Commissioner's Advisory Group, of which Connecticut Farm Bureau was a participating member, to complete the policy and implementation portion of the regulations process and to redraft the regulations to include the comments heard at the DEP's Public hearing, specifically providing farmers with access to water during drought and low flow periods.

2.) Complete the classification of rivers and streams before developing regulations to address the concerns identified.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Jonathan B. Bishop".

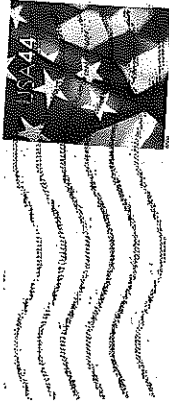
Jonathan B. Bishop
Vice President / Co-CEO

**BISHOP'S
ORCHARDS**

FARM MARKET & WINERY



1355 Boston Post Rd. Guilford, CT 06437



SOUTHERN CT 064

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Paul E. Stacey
Director of Planning and Standards
Bureau of Water Protection and Land Reuse
79 Elm Street
Hartford, CT 06106-5127

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